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KOREANS IN ACCORD ON NATIONAL TALKS

Basic Shape of Parliamentary North and South Meeting Settled in Panmunjom

PANMUNJOM, Korea, Nov. 17 (Reuters) — North and South Korea reached an accord today on the basic format for full-fledged parliamentary talks aimed at reducing tensions on the divided peninsula, the first substantive progress in four months of talks between the two countries' legislators.

In a three-hour meeting between five-member delegations in Panmunjon, a border truce village, Pyongyang said it would accept a two-tier format for the proposed main conference that Seoul suggested last month.

Rather than insisting on a total of nearly 400 participants, a formula the South dismissed as unwieldy and unworkable, the North proposed teams of 100 each and, as Seoul protested, agreed to cut the number further to 50.

South Korea, which had proposed that the core talks be limited to 20 on each side, asked for an adjournment to discuss the northern offer and then signaled its acceptance.

Meetings in Both Countries

The two sides agreed that their national assemblies, with a total membership of nearly 1,000, should meet in full force only for the ritual opening and closing rounds of talks and ceremonies. They agreed in principle to hold full-scale talks alternately in Seoul and Pyongyang.

"I think we have made advances this time, compared with the previous five rounds of fruitless talks begun in August," the chief North Korean delegate, Chun Kum Chol, told reporters after the three-hour meeting.

The chief South Korean delegate, Park Jun Kyu, told a separate news conference: "We have reached several important agreements toward realizing the main parliamentary talks. There was no acute confrontation between the two delegations today and I expect lingering differences over the agenda to be resolved at the next meeting. In sum, today's session marked a fresh breakthrough."

But still outstanding is agreement on the conference's agenda, on which the two sides appear far apart, particularly on the question of adopting a nonaggression declaration.

The two sides agreed to meet again on Dec. 15 to maintain the only existing channel of dialogue between the countries, who fought a three-year war ending in 1953.

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